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JOB-WORK

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Read this before you vote!

The 9th proposition on your ballot, next Tuesday, will ask you to vote for or against a law to compel the railroads of Missouri to employ an extra, and wholly unnecessary, trainman on every freight train of 40 cars or over, and on every passenger train of 6 cars or over.

Every fair minded voter is entitled to know the facts, in order that he may vote intelligently on this proposition.

The ostensible object of this law is to place an extra guard around the lives of the trainmen. The real object is to force the railroads to employ about 500 extra, and wholly unnecessary men.

How trains are now manned

At present, local and through freight trains are manned by an engineer, a fireman, a conductor and two trainmen, or brakemen, as they are generally mis-named. One of these so-called brakemen is usually stationed towards the front of the train—the other towards the rear. In cases of unscheduled stops, one of these men goes forward, ahead of the train, to flag any approaching train—the other goes to the rear for the same purpose. What would a third one do?

Trains are controlled by air brakes regardless of length

None of these brakemen applies brakes on a moving train. Every train is controlled by air brakes, operated from both the engine and the caboose, regardless of the length of the train, or the number of cars.

On passenger trains, the air brakes can be controlled from any car, and every car has a signal cord direct to the engine. What possible service could an extra trainman perform on a passenger train?

Not needed to relay signals

It is claimed that an extra trainman on a freight train of over 40 cars is necessary to relay signals to the engineer. Such is not the case.

Extra man wouldn't prevent accidents

It is claimed that an extra man would enable the trainmen to discover causes of accidents in time to prevent them. If such were the case the railroads would, long ago, have employed this extra man, as it would be far cheaper to do this than to pay for accidents.

It is not even claimed that an extra trainman would detect causes of accidents on a passenger train, in time to prevent them, yet, under this law, every passenger train of 6 cars or over is classed with a freight of over 40 cars, and compelled to carry an extra man for whom it is not even claimed that there is any need.

74% of accidents due to employee's own carelessness

Supporters of the law would have you believe that trainmen are ruthlessly killed or wounded, in Missouri, every few minutes, an exaggeration appalling in the magnitude of its misrepresentation. That trainmen are sometimes injured, and even a few of them are killed, is a source of great regret to the railroads, who are spending thousands upon thousands of dollars in Safety First work, to teach the trainmen to be careful. If the railroads could eliminate the accidents caused by the employee's own carelessness, 74% of the accidents to all trains, employees and passengers, would be avoided.

Fewer accidents on long trains

Supporters of the law would also have you believe that many accidents are due to the extra length of the trains, whereas, from all statistics available, there have actually been less accidents on trains of over 40 cars than there have been on trains of less than 40.

While the railroads do not claim that long trains are safer than short ones, the facts certainly sustain the claim that they are equally safe.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Public Service Commission has power to decide this question

If there is any need for these extra trainmen the Public Service Commission has full power to require the roads to employ them, whenever and wherever the Commission thinks they are necessary. Why then should a law be passed, over-riding the authority of this Commission, which is being paid by the State to regulate just such matters? The answer is plain—the Commission is composed of fair-minded men, who have good judgment, and they have not thought that the extra trainmen are necessary.

Similar law defeated in other states

Similar laws have been proposed in other states, but they have been defeated. Governors Foss of Massachusetts, Hughes and Dix of New York, Harmon of Ohio, and Cruce of Oklahoma have all vetoed similar laws as either unfair or unnecessary, and the legislatures of Texas and Louisiana have refused to pass such laws.

Would add \$500,000 a year to railroad expenses

To pass such a law in Missouri would add an unnecessary burden of half a million dollars a year to the already over-burdened railroads, without accomplishing any good except to 500 men, who would secure desirable jobs and render no valuable service in return for their pay.

The public would have to pay it

Since it is inevitable that the railroads must receive additional revenue, or go into bankruptcy, then it must be plain that this added burden, if voted, must finally fall on the general public.

If you were asked to vote an appropriation to support in idleness, or in useless labor, some 500 able-bodied men, your vote would be overwhelmingly NO. Gentlemen, that is proposition No. 9. Will you scratch YES and vote NO?

vention is the large proportion of train accidents caused by dereliction of duty by the employees involved. By far the greatest number of our serious train accidents are due to the failure of some responsible employee to perform an essential duty at the critical time." Out of 81 train accidents investigated recently by the Commission, 63 per cent were caused by the mistakes of employees—and in view of these facts, will not the legislating of hundreds of "extra brakemen" onto the railroads increase rather than decrease the number of accidents? In the light of the above statistics can there be any other result?

In this connection, is it not strange that the advocates of the "Full Crew Bill" have not cited statistics from the several states in which this law has been in effect for a number of years to prove their case? Doesn't any intelligent reader know they would have done so if the records were not against them? As a matter of fact, the ratio of accidents on every railroad in the country regardless of "Full Crew" laws vary in proportion to the number of men employed—for just as you cannot regulate the amount of rainfall by law so you cannot eliminate the human element of carelessness in men.

Taking Care of Present Employees

To make a long story short, the whole "Full Crew" propaganda is nothing more or less than a cleverly conceived appeal to the sympathy of a naturally sympathetic public—a house of cards which falls to pieces the moment it is brought in contact with the cold facts of past experience.

In their frantic efforts to curtail expenses during the last several years, the railroads have been compelled to lay off thousands of former employees—and at this moment hundreds of clerks, section men and others are given a "furlough" of several days per month in order that they may not be left without a position entirely. Instead of legislating hundreds of "extra brakemen" into useless jobs would it not be better to put the railroads in position to re-employ many men whom they have had to lay off and keep all employees working full time? Summing the whole matter up, Proposition No. 9 deserves to be emphatically defeated for the following concrete reasons:

Because, it is just as wrong to try to regulate by law the number of men a railroad shall hire as it would be to attempt to regulate by law the number of farm hands or clerks which a farmer or merchant shall hire.

Because, we have a Public Service Commission which has full power to compel any railroad in Missouri to hire additional brakemen or any other kind of workmen if, after due inquiry, it deems them necessary for the good of the public or of the employees themselves—a Commission created for this specific purpose and which is in position to discriminate between the different conditions which exist upon the different railroads.

Because, before the advocates of the "Full Crew Bill" had any right to ask the people of Missouri to fasten this unfair burden upon every railroad in the state, large and small, they should first have presented their grievances to the railroads themselves or to the Public Service Commission—neither of which they did.

Because, every additional burden visited upon the railroads at this time will finally have to be borne by the people who in the end must either put up the added expense or consent to see the railroads financially wrecked—a condition which would mean paralysis to Agriculture, Commerce and Industry throughout the state.

Because, when the people took over the complete control and regulation of the railroads they at the same time assumed the implied obligation to protect them against unfair and arbitrary assaults upon their revenues.

Because, labor, as well as the employers of labor, owes a profound duty to society not to levy a tribute upon it which is greater than the traffic will justly bear.

Because, our great commonwealth is still little more than in its infancy in Agricultural and Commercial development—a state which needs hundreds of miles of additional railroad mileage before it can make the most of its matchless resources and these improvements cannot be had if we continually advertise to the outer world that invested capital cannot get a "square deal" in Missouri.

Because, passing as we are through a series of bad crop years, a universal depression in all lines of business and the most tragic war in the World's history it is no time to assault the railroads which are to-day confronted by the greatest financial crisis in their history.

In conclusion, the reader should remember that the defeat of the "Full Crew Bill" leaves to its advocates the right to place any imaginary grievance before the State Public Service Commission which has the power to grant them any relief to which a fair investigation might entitle them. If you want to vote against Proposition No. 9, scratch out the word "yes"—Paid Adv. (To be continued next week.)

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We have just received a Splendid Line of FALL AND WINTER GOODS:

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IRONTON, MO.

HOW THE FARMERS OF TEXAS LOOKED UPON A FULL CREW BILL

WHY FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE UNION DEFEATED A FULL CREW PROPOSITION IN TEXAS LEGISLATURE

The present series of articles is intended as a brief campaign of education on those matters affecting railroads, concerning which the greatest misunderstanding exists in the public mind. As has been stated before, the railroads and the people face each other in a new relationship to-day. Not only do the people say what rates the railroads shall charge for service—but the hour is at hand when all new railroad securities will be subjected to federal and state surveillance before they can be offered for sale and just as the new currency system will make the recurrence of a panic like the one of 1907 impossible in the future, so questionable methods of railroad financing, such as occurred under the old regime a dozen years ago, will be impossible from this time forward.

While the general public, perhaps, does not realize it, there is no more powerful factor for clean business methods in the country to-day than the thousands of big business men in all lines of industrial activity who are demanding these methods not only because they are right but as a matter of protection for themselves against those who bring discredit upon the line of activity in which they are engaged.

Since the enactment of the "Full Crew Bill" which was touched upon in last week's article would compel the railroads of Missouri to ask for a half million dollars larger yearly increase in rates than they will otherwise need, a little further discussion of this proposition may not be out of place.

Action of Farmers in Texas. In this connection, the action of the Farmers Co-Operative Union of Texas which was chiefly instrumental in defeating a "Full Crew Bill" in the 33rd Legislature of that state, should be of keen interest to the farmers of Missouri at this time. In the annual convention of the Union which met at San Antonio in August, 1913, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"We oppose the placing of any and all unjust burdens upon the railroads which the shipper must finally pay and we endorse the action of President Peter Radford and all other officers

and members of the Texas Farmers Co-Operative Union in opposing the "Full Crew Bill" before the 33rd Legislature, said officers and members in good faith believing that the additional operating expenses of the railroads of one million dollars per year, which would have followed from the enactment of said law, would have been thereby transferred to the shoulders of the producers of the state without materially benefitting the public." Will the farmers of Missouri be less wide awake to their best interests in the forthcoming election when they vote on Proposition No. 9?

Putting Shoe on Other Foot

Suppose a proposition were pending to increase the taxes of the farmers of Missouri or of the merchants of the state more than a half million dollars per year? Would they not emphasize the injustice of it to the people? Would not every farmers organization and Commercial Club in the state denounce it? Or suppose an act was pending compelling the farmers and merchants of Missouri to hire hundreds of extra farm hands and clerks they do not need—would they not bitterly resent it? And yet this is exactly what the advocates of the "Full Crew Bill" are seeking to do to the railroads. Certainly merely because a railroad happens to be a public service corporation it has not lost all right to a square deal. Furthermore, as has been emphasized before, in this instance the welfare of the railroads is the welfare of the people—for when the burdens of the railroads become heavier than they can bear, the people must choose between paying them more money or sending them upon the rocks of confiscation and ruin.

Meeting the Issue Squarely

But it is not the purpose of this article to plead for public sympathy but to meet the advocates of the "Full Crew Bill" squarely upon their own ground and without abuse to show that their demand rests upon nothing more than a sentimental appeal to the voter—an attempt to create the impression in the public mind that the railroads do not employ enough brakemen to safely operate their trains and that this is responsible for all manner of wrecks, injured workmen, etc. This is the ground they have chosen upon which to wage their battle and if the public records and statistics make their claims ridiculous, the voters will be justified in ignoring the heart-rending appeals with which the state has been flooded during the last month.

In last week's article we quoted statistics from a number of prominent

railroads showing that more trainmen are injured on trains carrying less than 40 cars than on those carrying over 40 cars. The later records of the M. K. & T. show that during the last fiscal year not a single employee was killed on its lines in Missouri and that 37 employees were injured on trains carrying less than 40 cars and only 21 on trains carrying more than 40 cars—and out of these 58 injuries 11 were no more serious than getting a cinder in the eye. In varying degrees the other roads show the same general facts.

Still, more interesting, however, are the statistics of the Public Service Commission at Jefferson City which is a record of all railroad accidents and their causes. The report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1913, shows the following facts: Out of a total of 48 railroad employees killed in Missouri during that year, 10 lost their lives in collisions, 14 by falling off trains, 28 by jumping on or off trains, 6 were struck by trains and 4 were killed in coupling cars. In other words, 36 out of 48 were killed through contributory carelessness of their own in one way or another. Again, 104 were injured in collisions, 209 in falling off trains, 220 in jumping on or off trains, 28 were struck by trains while 98 were injured in coupling cars—again showing the overwhelming element of contributory negligence upon the part of employees themselves. On the other hand, the records show that only one trainman was killed in the state during the entire year and only 7 injured from defective cars or engines—thus completely disproving the wild statements made by the "Full Crew" literature concerning the wrecks caused by "loose car doors," "dragging brake beams," "broken rods" etc.

In view of these incontrovertible facts, what becomes of the absurdly exaggerated statements on bill boards etc., that a "trainman is killed or crippled every seven minutes"? A further analysis of the Public Service Commission figures show, that only an average of four trainmen were killed per month while only an average of four were injured per day on all the railroads of Missouri during the year—and yet this is the kind of argument upon which the voters of Missouri are asked to fasten an additional burden of more than a half million dollars yearly upon the transportation companies of the state!

The Inter-State Commerce Commission In its 1912 report the Inter-State Commerce Commission says: "The most disquieting and perplexing feature of the problem of accident pro-